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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BRATISLAVA 000425

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [UNSC](#) [MOPS](#) [RU](#) [KO](#) [LO](#)
SUBJECT: FM KUBIS ON KOSOVO, CFE, AFGHANISTAN, UNGA

REF: A. A) BRATISLAVA 417

[1](#)B. B) BRATISLAVA 421

Classified By: Ambassador Rodolphe M. Vallee for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)
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[1](#)1. (C) Summary. Ambassador Vallee met with Foreign Minister Jan Kubis on July 25 to discuss a wide range of topics. Highlights include the following:

- FM Kubis believes that, given the failure to pass a UNSC resolution on Kosovo, the EU can develop a common position on Kosovo within the 120-day negotiating period that would serve as a basis for a durable multilateral solution for Kosovo.
- Kubis emphasized that the U.S. position on the Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE) Treaty was far too passive, and that our lack of a detailed agenda strengthened Russia's hand.
- PM Fico, Kubis, and Ambassador to NATO Igor Slobodnik will discuss upgrading Slovakia's NATO commitment to Afghanistan after the August vacation.
- Kubis and President Gasparovic will be attending the UN General Assembly in September, and Kubis will also be visiting Washington afterward. He would like to meet with Secretary Rice if at all possible.

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- Progress in Congress on Visa Waiver was noted, but Kubis believed that, even if passed, the lengthy implementation process of the new law would greatly diminish its positive public relations impact.

End Summary.

Kosovo

[1](#)2. (C) Ambassador Vallee opened the meeting with Kosovo, following up on his conversation last week in which Prime Minister Fico expressed confidence that a common EU position on Kosovo would be reached in lieu of a UNSC resolution (reftel A). Kubis endorsed the idea of drafting a common EU Kosovo proposal, to be carried out on the ground by a EU ESDP Mission, as a primary element of the proposed solution. Regarding this month's stalemate at the UN, he believed that it was wise not to push Russia to use its veto at this time and believed that a fixed negotiation period of 120 days would be sufficient for the EU and other stakeholders to develop a proposal that "could be blessed by the troika" (E.U., U.S., and Russia) and presented to the UNSC -- although he doubted ultimate Russian support. Though supportive of continued negotiations, Kubis recognized that calls by certain EU member states for "another round of genuine negotiations" on Kosovo undercut the EU's own position of supporting Ahtisaari, and he had expressed this view forcefully in the most recent GAERC meeting.

13. (C) FM Kubis did not outline any proposals for a common EU position, but stated that Kosovar Albanians would not settle for anything less than "supervised independence," and that EU proposals would have to be made accordingly. He also recognized Ambassador Vallee's comment that the U.S. has made clear that Kosovo independence will happen one way or another. Kubis added that he would not exclude the idea that a Kosovo resolution in the UNSC should be tabled early next year, provoking a veto by Russia, and leading to the creation of a EU- and U.S.-centered coalition. If a new UNSC resolution were forwarded with the full support of the EU, Slovakia could support the resolution but not co-sponsor it, given the views of the Slovak Parliament. Kubis also noted the July 25 Kosovo Contact Group meeting in Vienna, and asked the Ambassador for a readout on its results.

CFE Treaty

14. (C) Regarding Russia's suspension of the CFE Treaty, Kubis expressed that he thinks Russia would prefer to maintain a modified version of the CFE Treaty, absent of accompanying Istanbul commitments, rather than scrap it altogether. In any case, he believes that Russia outsmarted the U.S. and NATO by calling for last month's Vienna conference, since NATO was only able to convey the minimalist message that the current cornerstones of the CFE should be maintained. Kubis emphasized quite strongly that NATO's lack of a dynamic position allowed Russia to frame the conversation on CFE. The FM said specifically that stronger US position on CFE is needed, and that Slovakia would be happy to help with that. Kubis was quite emotional on this point, seeming to imply that the U.S. was willing to softpedal the CFE and Central European interests in general in order to focus on other priority issues with Russia.

UN General Assembly

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15. (C) Kubis confirmed that he will be attending the UN General Assembly this year in September/October, along with President Gasparovic. The FM added that he would be in Washington for a couple days immediately after the UNGA, most likely October 5-6, though his calendar has not yet been set.

Kubis requested a brief meeting (15 minutes) with Secretary Rice to discuss Kosovo and other issues. He expressed gratitude for our offer to help set up a meeting with Under Secretary of State Nicholas Burns but wanted to also push for

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a meeting with the Secretary.

Afghanistan

16. (C) Regarding Afghanistan, Kubis expressed satisfaction that Fico gave Ambassador Vallee positive feedback last week on the possibility of increasing Slovak NATO commitments in Afghanistan (reftel B). The Ambassador stressed both short-term training needs (such as an Aviation Mentor Team, training helicopter pilots and mechanics), and the long-term needs of a potential Slovak infantry commitment in Kandahar after the Slovak engineering unit in the region finishes its rotation. While Kubis seemed more sanguine about the commitment to training than to infantry, he said that Fico would consult with himself, Ambassador to NATO Slobodnik, and Defense Minister Kasicky to consider "upgrading the quality and quantity" of Slovak NATO commitments in Afghanistan. These meetings would take place after everyone returns from August vacations.

Visa Waiver

17. (C) Ambassador Vallee updated FM Kubis on visa waiver legislation pending in Congress, explaining that House-Senate conferees had been named, and that we are cautiously optimistic about prospects for approval of the Senate visa

waiver legislation in the final package to be submitted to President Bush. The Ambassador emphasized that, given the Feinstein Amendment and security requirements, it could take a long time before visa waiver could be implemented in Slovakia in the best case scenario. He cautioned against public statements that could raise expectations in the interim. Kubis opined that such time delays would almost cancel the public relations impact of passing visa waiver legislation. The FM seemed skeptical that any legislation would be passed.

VALLEE